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THOMAS MUSKERRY A  
PLAY IN THREE ACTS  
BY PADRAIC COLUM

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To T. H. K.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Here, then, is the third of my Irish Plays. With "The Land" and "The Fiddler's House" I inscribe "Thomas Muskerry" to you.

The three plays have a theme in common: Murtagh Cosgar, Mary Hourican, and Thomas Muskerry have each to face a problem arising out of the life of the family. The father, the daughter, and the grandfather are held to the group by something of self-interest; they have put some of their ambition into the formation or the maintenance of the family, and each is opposed by one of a like character. The family is further from Thomas Muskerry than from Murtagh Cosgar or Mary Hourican. His conflict is not with Mrs. Crilly nor with Crofton Crilly, nor with Anna Crilly; it is with the whole household he has created. What finally drives him away is the disaster in the cupboard.

"The Land" is a sketch for a play, "The Fiddler's House" is two acts of a play. Now that I read the plays, Conn Hourican and Mary Hourican in "The Fiddler's House" are more vivid to me than any of the people in "The Land." I know that you prefer "Broken Soil" to the "Fiddler's House," the play that has taken its place. We all dislike the stage of consciousness we have just passed, and this dislike made me impatient of many things in "Broken Soil." But

I thought Conn Hourican worth a play, and I tried to make a new one for him.

I hope no one will regard "Thomas Muskerry" as a gloomy play. If the issue had been narrowed to the death of the central character I could never have written the play. "Thomas Muskerry" closes with the call of the pipes, and with a man of energy and imagination set free and on the roads. I am afraid I have satirized the Crilly family. Life, in terms of Catholic philosophy, is means to the individualization of the spirit. Socially one may have more sympathy with Thomas Muskerry than with Crofton Crilly or Felix Tournour, but the dramatist is unable to conceive of one life being less significant than another. . . . We are in a studio and painted canvasses are lying about. The artist puts a frame before one of the canvasses and at once the picture is a mark for our attention. We are at the rehearsal of a play; the actors cross an empty stage speaking for their cues; scene shifters drag on a few forms, an interior is made, the actors are isolated from the fag-end of our thought, what they say and do is in relation to the little world before us. A beggar woman crouched on the street begs an alms from us. We hardly notice her face, her attitude or her gesture. But let someone impersonate the beggar on the stage and our eye-sight will become adjusted: [the peaks and lines on her face, the stiffly-held mendicant hand are significant, we recognize them as movements of the spirit that is in us all. We would ask of the actress who would impersonate her that she should first discover the beggar in herself that she should make her discovery plain to us by her technical skill and living to us by her creative energy; and we demand so much from the dramatist. The dramatist is concerned not primarily with the creation

of character, but with the creation of situations. For character conceived as a psychological synthesis he has only a secondary concern. His main effort is always towards the creation of situations that will produce a powerful impression on an audience, for it is situation that makes the strongest appeal to our sympathies.

Some years ago I thought of a grandiose task, the writing of the comedy of Irish life through all the social stages. I had thought of this work (perhaps after discovering Balzac) as a piece of social history. I no longer think of such grandiose plans. But I am glad that I have been able to set down three characters that stood as first types in my human comedy, the peasant, the artist, the official—Murtagh Cosgar, Conn Hourican, Thomas Muskerry.

PADRAIC COLUM,

*April, 1910.*



## CHARACTERS

THOMAS MUSKERRY .		<i>The Master of Garrisowen Workhouse.</i>
MRS. CRILLY .	.	<i>His Daughter.</i>
CROFTON CRILLY .	.	<i>His Son-in-law.</i>
ALBERT CRILLY .	.	<i>His Grandson.</i>
ANNA CRILLY .	.	<i>His Granddaughter.</i>
JAMES SCOLLARD .	.	<i>Thomas Muskerry's Successor.</i>
FELIX TOURNOUR .	.	<i>The Porter at Workhouse Lodge.</i>
MYLES GORMAN .	.	<i>A Blind Piper.</i>
CHRISTY CLARKE .	.	<i>A Boy reared in the Workhouse.</i>
SHANLEY .	.	} <i>Paupers in Workhouse.</i>
MICKIE CRIPES .	.	
AN OLD MAN .	.	

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SCENE : *Garrisowen, a town in the Irish Midlands.*



# THOMAS MUSKERRY

## ACT FIRST

*The Master's office in Garrisowen Workhouse. It is partly an office, partly a living room. To the right is a door opening on corridor, and in the back, left, a door leading to the Master's apartments. There is an iron stove down from back and towards right, and a big grandfather's clock back towards door of apartments. A basket arm-chair down from stove, and a wooden chair beside it. There is a desk against wall, left, and an office stool before it. Down from this desk a table on which is a closed desk. On table are books, papers, and files. On a wooden chair beside the arm-chair is a heap of newspapers and periodicals. There is a rack beside corridor door, and on rack a shawl, an old coat, a hat, and a bunch of big keys. In the corner, right, is a little cabinet, and on it a small mirror. Above door of apartments a picture of Daniel O'Connell. The grandfather's clock is ticking audibly. It is 8.45 p.m. The gas over desk is lighted.*

*Christy Clarke, a youth of about seventeen, is seated in the armchair reading a periodical. His clothes are threadbare, but brushed and*

clean. He looks studious, and has intellectual possibilities. The clock ticks on, the boy reads, but with little attention. At the corridor door there is a knocking. Christy Clarks turns slightly. The door opens, and a tall man in the ugly dress of a pauper is seen. The man is Felix Tournour. He carries in a bucket of coal. He performs this action like one who has acquired the habit of work under an overseer. He is an ugly figure in his pauper dress. His scanty beard is coal black. He has a wide mouth and discoloured teeth. His forehead is narrow and bony. He is about forty-five.

Tournour (in a harsh voice, after looking around). Is he not back yet?

Christy (without stirring). Is who not back yet?

Tournour. The master I'm talking about. I don't know where he does be going these evenings.  
[He shovels coal into the stove.]

Christy. And what is it to you where he does be going?

Tournour. Don't talk to me like that, young fellow. You're poorhouse rearing, even though you are a pet. Will he be sitting up here to-night, do you know?

Christy. What's that to you whether he will or not?

Tournour. If he's sitting up late he'll want more coal to his fire.

Christy. Well, the abstracts will have to be finished to-night.

Tournour. Then he will be staying up. He goes out for a walk in the evenings now, and I don't know where he does be going.

Christy. He goes out for a walk in the country. (Tournour makes a leer of contempt.) Do you

never go for a walk in the country, Felix Tournour?

*Tournour.* They used to take me out for walks when I was a little fellow, but they never got me out into the country since.

*Christy.* I suppose, now that you're in the porter's lodge, you watch everyone that goes up and down the road?

*Tournour.* It gratifies me to do so—would you believe that now?

*Christy.* You know a lot, Felix Tournour.

*Tournour.* We're told to advance in knowledge, young fellow. How long is Tom Muskerry the Master of Garrisowen Workhouse?

*Christy.* Thirty years this spring.

*Tournour.* Twenty-nine years.

*Christy.* He's here thirty years according to the abstracts.

*Tournour.* Twenty-nine years.

*Christy.* Thirty years.

*Tournour.* Twenty-nine years. I was born in the workhouse, and I mind when the Master came in to it. Whist now, here he is, and time for him.

*[He falls into an officious manner. He closes up the stove and puts bucket away. Then he goes over to desk, and, with his foot on the rung of the office stool, he turns the gas on full. Christy Clarke gets out of arm-chair, and begins to arrange the periodicals that are on wooden chair. The corridor door opens. The man who appears is not the Master, however. He is the blind piper, Myles Gorman, who is dressed in the pauper garb. Myles Gorman is a Gael of the West of Ireland, with a face full of intellectual vigour. He is about sixty, and carries himself with energy. His face is pale and he has a*



*fringe of a white beard. The eye-balls in his head are contracted, but it is evident he has some vestiges of sight. Before the others are aware who he is, he has advanced into the room. He stands there now turning the attentive face of the blind.*

*Gorman.* Mister Muskerry! Are you there, Mister Muskerry?

*Tournour.* What do you want, my oul' fellow?

*Gorman (with a puzzled look).* Well, now, I've a favour to ask of your honour.

*Tournour.* Be off out of this to your ward.

*Gorman.* Is that Mister Muskerry?

*Christy.* Mister Muskerry isn't here.

*Gorman.* And who am I talking to?

*Christy.* You are talking to Felix Tournour.

*Gorman.* Felix Tournour! Ay, ay. Good-night, Felix Tournour. When will the Master be back?

*Tournour (coming to him).* Not till you're out of this, and back in your ward.

*Gorman.* Wasn't there a boy speaking to me?

*Christy.* Yes (*speaking as if to a deaf man*). The Master will be going the rounds in a while, and you can speak to him in the ward.

*Gorman.* I've a favour to ask the Master, and I don't want to ask it before the others. (*To Christy*). Will the Master be here soon, a vick vig? \*

*Tournour (taking him by the shoulders).* Here, now, come on, this is your way out. (*He turns Gorman to the door. As he is putting him out Thomas Muskerry enters.*)

*Tournour.* This oul' fellow came into the office, and I was putting him back into his ward.

\* *A mhic bhig*, my little son.

*Muskerry.* Leave the man alone

[*Tournour* retreats to the stove and takes up the bucket; after a look behind he goes out and closes the corridor door. *Christy Clarke* takes the periodicals over to table and sits down. *Myles Gorman* has been eager and attentive. *Thomas Muskerry* stands with his back to the stove. He is over sixty. He is a large man, fleshy in face and figure, sanguine and benevolent in disposition. He has the looks and movements of one in authority. His hair is white and long; his silver beard is trimmed. His clothes are loosely fitting. He wears no overcoat, but has a white knitted muffler round his neck. He has on a black, broad-brimmed hat, and carries a walking-stick.

*Muskerry.* Well, my good man?

*Gorman.* I'm here to ask a favour from you, Master.

*Muskerry.* You should proffer your request when I'm in the ward. However, I'm ready to give you my attention.

*Gorman.* I'm a blinded man, Master, and when you're in the ward I can't get you by yourself conveniently. I can't come up to you like the other oul' men and speak to you private like.

*Muskerry.* Well, now, what can I do for you?

*Gorman* (*eagerly*). They tell me that to-morrow's the market-day, and I thought that you might give me a pass, and let me go out about the town.

*Muskerry.* We'll consider it, *Gorman*.

*Gorman.* Master, let me out in the town on the market-day.

*Muskerry.* We couldn't let you out to play your pipes through the town.

*Gorman.* I'm not thinking of the music at all, Master, but to be out in the day and to feel the throng moving about, and to be talking to the men that do be on the roads.

*Muskerry.* We'll consider it, Gorman. (*He takes off muffler, and puts it on back of arm-chair.*)

*Gorman.* Well, I'm very much obliged to your honour. Good-night to you, Master. (*He passes Muskerry and goes towards the door. Muskerry has been regarding him.*)

*Muskerry.* Tell me this, Gorman, were you always on the roads?

*Gorman.* I was driving cattle, and I was dealing in horses. Then I took up with an oul' man, and he taught me the pipes. I'm playing the pipes ever since, and that's thirty years ago. Well, the eyes began to wither up on me, and now I've only a stim of sight. I'm a blinded man from this out, Master.

*Muskerry.* And what will you do?

*Gorman.* Oh, sure the roads of Ireland are before me when I leave this; I'll be playing my bit of music. (*He moves to the door.*)

*Muskerry.* Tell me; have you any family yourself?

*Gorman.* Ne'er a chick nor child belonging to me. Ne'er a woman lay by me. I went the road by myself. Will you think of what I asked you, Master?

*Muskerry.* I'll consider it.

*Gorman.* Good-night to your honour. Remember my name, Master—Gorman, Myles Gorman.

[*Muskerry stands looking after Gorman.*]

*Muskerry.* Now, Christy Clarke, I consider that the man gone out is a very exceptional man.

*Christy.* Is it Myles Gorman?

*Muskerry.* Yes. I'd even say that, considering



his station in life, Myles Gorman is a very superior man.

*Christy.* They say he's not a good musician.

*Muskerry.* And maybe he's not. I consider, however, that there's great intelligence in his face. He stands before you, and you feel that he has the life of a young colt, and then you're bound to think that, in spite of the fact that he's blind and a wanderer, the man has not wasted his life. (*Muskerry settles himself in the arm-chair.*)

*Christy.* Will you give him leave for to-morrow?

*Muskerry.* No, Christy, I will not.

*Christy.* Why not, Mister Muskerry?

*Muskerry.* That man would break bounds and stay away.

*Christy.* Do you think he would?

*Muskerry.* He'd fly off, like the woodquest flying away from the tame pigeons.

*Christy.* He and his brother had a farm between them. His brother was married, and one day the brother told Myles to go to Dublin to see a comrade of his who was sick. Myles was home in a week, and when he came back he found that his brother had sold the place and was gone out of the country.

*Muskerry.* His brother did wrong, but he didn't do so much wrong to Myles Gorman.

*Christy.* How is that, Mister Muskerry?

*Muskerry.* He sent Myles Gorman to his own life. He's a man who went his own way always; a man who never had any family nor any affairs; a man far different from me, Christy Clarke. I was always in the middle of affairs. Then, too, I busied myself about other people. It was for the best, I think; but that's finished. On the desk under your hand is a letter, and I want you to bring it to me.



*Christy (going through papers idly).* "I am much obliged for your favour ——"

*Muskerry.* That's not it.

*Christy (reading another letter).* "I am about to add to the obligations under which I stand to you, by recommending to your notice my grandson, Albert Crilly ——"

*Muskerry.* That's the letter. It's the last of its kind. Bring it to me. (*Christy Clarke brings over the letter.*) There comes a turn in the blood and a turn in the mind, Christy. This while back I've been going out to the country instead of into the town, and coming back here in the evenings I've seen the workhouse with the big wall around it, and the big gate going into it, and I've said to myself that Thomas Muskerry ought to be as secure and contented here as if he was in his own castle.

*Christy.* And so you ought, Mister Muskerry.

*Muskerry.* Look round at the office, Christy. I've made it as fit for me as the nest for the wren. I'll spend a few more years here, and then I'll go out on pension. I won't live in the town. I've seen a place in the country I'd like, and the people will be leaving it in a year or two.

*Christy.* Where is it, Mister Muskerry?

*Muskerry.* I'll say no more about it now, but its not far from this, and its near the place where I was reared.

*Christy.* And so you'll go back to your own place?

*Muskerry.* As Oliver Goldsmith, my fellow-county man, and I might almost say, my fellow parishioner, says—What's this the lines are about the hare, Christy?

*Christy.* "And like the Hare whom Hounds  
and Horns pursue  
Pants to the place from whence at first he flew.

*Muskerry.* Aye.

“And like the Hare whom Hounds and Horns pursue”—(*The clock strikes nine.*)

*Christy.* You weren't on the rounds yet?

*Muskerry (startled).* Would you believe it, now, it was nearly passing my mind to go on the rounds? (*He rises, putting the letter in his pocket.*) Where's that fellow, Albert Crilly? He was to have been in here to give me a hand with the abstracts. Christy Clarke, go down to Miss Coghlan's and get me two novelettes. Bring me up two nice love stories, and be here when I come back.

[*Christy Clarke takes his cap off rack and goes out. Thomas Muskerry puts on his scarf, goes to the rack and takes down the bunch of keys. As he is going out Felix Tournour enters with a bucket of coal. He carries it over to the stove.*

*Muskerry.* Now, Tournour, sweep up this place.

[*Thomas Muskerry goes out by corridor door. Felix Tournour takes brush from under desk, left, and begins to sweep in the direction of corridor door.*

*Tournour.* Sweeping, sweeping! I'll run out of the house some day on account of the work I've to do for Master Thomas Muskerry. (*He leans on his brush in front of stove.*) I know why you're going for walks in the country, my oul' cod. There's them in the town that you've got enough of. You don't want to go bail for Madam Daughter, nor for Count Crofton Crilly, your son-in-law, nor for the Masters and Mistresses; all right, my oul' cod-fish. That I may see them laying you out on the flags of Hell. (*He puts the brush standing upright, and speaks to it.*)

“The Devil went out for a ramble at night,  
Through Garrisowen Union to see every sight.

The oul' men were dreaming of meat to come near them,

And the Devil cocked ears at the words for to hear them.

'Twice a year we get meat,' said the toothless oul' men,

'Oh, Lord send the meat won't be too tough again.'

To clear away dishes Mick Fogarty goes,

May the Devil burn the nails off his toes.

Deep dreaming that night of fast days before,

Sagging the walls with the pull of his snore,

In his chamber above Thomas Muskerry lay snug,

When the Devil this summons roared in his lug—

*[The door of the Master's apartments is opened, and Albert Crilly enters. Albert Crilly is a young man, who might be a bank clerk or a medical student. He is something of a dude, but has a certain insight and wit.]*

Albert (*lighting a cigarette*). Is the grandparent here, Tournour?

Tournour. He's gone on the rounds, Mister Albert.

Albert. What time was he up this morning?

Tournour. He was late enough. He wasn't up in time to come to Mass with us.

Albert. The old man will get into trouble.

Tournour. If the nuns hear about it.

Albert. He'll have to give the whole thing up soon.

Tournour. He's well off that can get somebody else to do the work for him. (*He continues to sweep towards corridor.*)

Albert. Tournour, you're a damned clever



fellow. I heard a piece of yours yesterday that I thought was damned good.

*Tournour.* Was it a rhyme?

*Albert.* It was something called "The Devil's Rambles."

*Tournour* (taking a step towards him). Don't let the boss hear, and I'll tell it to you, Mr. Albert. (He holds the brush in his hands and is about to begin the recitation when Crofton Crilly enters from the Master's apartments. Crofton Crilly has a presentable appearance. He is big and well made, has a fair beard and blue eyes. A pipe is always in his mouth. He is a loiterer, a talker, a listener.)

*Crilly.* Are you going to finish the abstracts to-night, Albert?

*Albert.* I believe I am. Go on with "The Devil's Rambles," Tournour.

*Crilly.* I heard it in Keegan's. It's damn good.

*Tournour.* I don't like saying it before Mister Crilly.

*Crilly* (with easy contempt). Go on with it, man; I'll leave a pint in Keegan's for you.

*Tournour.* Well, you mightn't like it.

*Crilly.* Have done talking and go on with it.

*Tournour* (reciting).—

"In his chamber above a person lay snug,  
When the Devil this summons roared in his  
lug—

'Get up,' said the Devil, 'and swear you'll be  
true,

And the oath of allegiance I'll tender anew.  
You'll have pork, veal, and lamb, mutton-chops,  
fowl and fish,

Cabbage and carrots and leeks as you wish.  
No fast days to you will make visitation,  
For your sake the town will have dispensation.

Long days you will have, without envy or strife,  
 And when you depart you'll find the same life,  
 And in the next world you'll have your will and  
 your sway,

With a Poor-house to govern all your own way,  
 And I'll promise you this; to keep up your state,  
 You'll have Felix Tournour to watch at the  
 gate.' "

*Crilly.* That's damn good. I must get a copy  
 of the whole of it to show at Keegan's.

*[Tournour has swept as far as the corridor  
 door. He opens it and sweeps down the  
 passage. He goes out and closes door.]*

*Crilly.* That's a damn clever fellow. *(He  
 becomes anxious, as with a troubled recollection.  
 He goes to the little cabinet, opens it, and takes  
 out a bottle of whisky and a glass. He pours  
 some whisky into the glass, and remains looking  
 at himself in the mirror. He smooths his beard.  
 He goes to the arm-chair with the glass of whisky,  
 the anxious expression still on his face.)* This is a  
 cursed town. *(He drinks.)*

*Albert.* Every town in Ireland is a cursed town.

*Crilly.* But this is an extraordinarily cursed  
 town. Everybody's in debt to everybody else. I  
 don't know what's to be done. Now, imagine  
 that fellow, James Covey, failing in business and  
 getting clear out of the town.

*Albert.* Covey seems to have done it well.

*Crilly.* God knows how many he has stuck.

*Albert.* Well, he didn't stick the Crillys for  
 anything.

*Crilly.* Albert, you don't know how these  
 financial things work out. Do you think would  
 his brother settle?

*Albert.* Settle with whom?

*Crilly.* Well . . . with any of the . . .

any of the people that have . . . I don't know. It's a cursed town. If I had joined the police at your age, I'd have a pension by this, and I mightn't care for any of them.

*Albert.* I wish I had a job and I'd wait on the pension.

*Crilly.* Oh, you'll be all right. The grandfather is seeing about your job.

*Albert.* If the grand-parent gets me that job I'll want two new suits at least.

*Crilly.* 'Pon my soul, Albert, I don't know what's to be done. (*His mind wanders off.*) I suppose the abstracts have to go out in the morning.

*Albert.* They have. And damn all the old man has done to them.

*Crilly.* The Guardians hear that he's late in the mornings, Albert, and some of them are beginning to question his fitness to check the stores.

*Albert.* The old man ought to resign.

*Crilly.* I suppose he ought. I'm not wishing for his resignation myself, Albert. You know your mother regards it as a settled thing that he should come and live with us.

*Albert.* The mother and Anna are preparing for the event.

*Crilly.* How's that, Albert?

*Albert.* Mother has James Scollard in her eye for the new Master.

*Crilly.* Right enough! Scollard would get it, too, and then he would marry Anna.

*Albert.* That's the arrangement, I expect.

*Crilly.* It mightn't be bad. Scollard mightn't want Nancy's money under that arrangement. Still I don't like the idea of the old man living in the house.

*Albert.* The mother would never think of letting him take himself and his pension anywhere else.



*Crilly.* I don't think so.

*Albert.* I wouldn't be surprised if he did go somewhere else. I hear he often goes up to that cottage in Stradrina.

*Crilly.* What cottage, Albert?

*Albert.* Briar Cottage. I hear he sits down there, and talks of coming to live in the place.

*Crilly (warningly).* Albert, don't clap hands behind the bird. Take my word, and say nothing about it.

*Albert.* All right.

*Crilly.* We'd have no comfort in the house if your mother's mind was distracted.

[*Mrs. Crilly enters from corridor. She is a woman of forty, dressed in a tailor-made costume. She has searching eyes. There is something of hysteria about her mouth. She has been good-looking.*

*Crilly.* Good-night, Marianne.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Are you finishing the abstracts, Albert?

*Albert.* I'm working at them. It's a good job we didn't leave the old man much latitude for making mistakes.

*Mrs. Crilly (closing door).* He'll have to resign.

*Crilly.* Good God, Marianne. (*He rises.*)

*Mrs. Crilly.* Well. Let him be sent away without a pension. Of course, he can live with us the rest of his life.

*Crilly.* I don't know what's in your mind at all, Marianne. (*He crosses over to the cabinet, opens it, and fills out another glass of whisky.*)

*Albert.* Let the old man do what suits himself.

*Crilly (coming back to stove).* Do, Marianne. Let him do what suits himself. For the present.

*Mrs. Crilly.* For pity's sake put down that glass and listen to what I have to say.

*Crilly.* What's the matter, Marianne.



*Mrs. Crilly.* James Scollard came to me to-day, and he told me about the things that are noticed. . . . The nuns notice them, the Guardians notice them. He misses Mass. He is late on his rounds. He can't check the stores that are coming into the house. He may get himself into such trouble that he'll be dismissed with only an apology for a pension, or with no pension at all.

*Crilly.* I don't know what's to be done.

*Mrs. Crilly.* If he could be got to resign now James Scollard would have a good chance of becoming Workhouse Master. He would marry Anna, and we would still have some hand in the affairs of the House.

*Crilly.* Yes, yes. I think that Scollard could make a place for himself.

*Albert.* The old man won't be anxious to retire.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Why shouldn't he retire when his time is up?

*Albert.* Well, here he is what's called a potentate. He won't care to come down and live over Crilly's shop.

*Mrs. Crilly.* And where else would he live in the name of God?

*Albert.* He won't want to live with our crowd.

*Mrs. Crilly.* What crowd? The boys can be sent to school, you'll be on your situation, and Anna will be away. (*She seats herself in the arm-chair.*) I don't know what Albert means when he says that the Master would not be content to live with us. It was always settled that he would come to us when his service was over.

[*Albert, who has been going over the books, has met something that surprises him. He draws Crilly to the desk. The two go over the papers, puzzled and excited. Anna Crilly enters from corridor. She is a handsome girl of about nineteen or*

*twenty, with a rich complexion, dark hair and eyes. She is well dressed, and wears a cap of dark fur. She stands at the stove, behind her mother, holding her hands over the stove. Mrs. Crilly watches the pair at the desk.*

*Mrs. Crilly.* We can't think of allowing a pension of fifty pounds a year to go out of our house. Where will we get money to send the boys to school?

*Anna.* Mother. Grandfather is going to live away from us.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Why do you repeat what Albert says?

*Anna.* I didn't hear Albert say anything.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Then, what are you talking about?

*Anna.* Grandfather goes to Martin's cottage nearly every evening, and stays there for hours. They'll be leaving the place in a year or two, and Grandfather was saying that he would take the cottage when he retired from the Workhouse.

*Mrs. Crilly.* When did you hear this?

*Anna.* This evening. Delia Martin told me.

*Mrs. Crilly.* And that's the reason why he has kept away from us. He goes to strangers, and leaves us in black ignorance of his thought.

*[Crilly and Albert are busy at desk.]*

*Crilly.* Well, damn it all ——

*Albert.* Here's the voucher.

*Crilly.* God! I don't know what's to be done.

*Albert.* It's a matter of fifty tons.

*[Albert turns round deliberately, leaving his father going through the papers in desperate eagerness. Albert takes a cigarette from behind his ear, takes a match-box from his waistcoat pocket, and strikes a light. He goes towards door of apartments. Mrs. Crilly rises.]*

*Albert (his hand on the handle of door.)* Well so-long.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Where are you going?

*Albert.* I'm leaving you to talk it over with the old man.

[*Mrs. Crilly looks from Albert to Crilly.*]

*Crilly.* The Master has let himself in for something serious, Marianne.

*Albert.* It's a matter of fifty pounds. The old man has let the Guardians pay for a hundred tons of coal when only fifty were delivered.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Is that so, Crofton?

*Crilly.* It looks like it, Marianne.

*Albert.* There were fifty tons of coal already in stores, but the Governor didn't take them into account. That cute boy, James Covey, delivered fifty tons and charged for the hundred. The old man passed on the certificate, and the Guardians paid Covey. They helped him to his passage to America. (*He opens door and goes through.*)

*Mrs. Crilly.* They will dismiss him—dismiss him without a pension.

*Anna.* Mother. If he gets the pension first, could they take it back from him?

*Crilly.* No. But they could make him pay back the fifty pounds in instalments.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Fifty pounds! We can't afford to lose fifty pounds.

*Anna.* Who would find out about the coal, father?

*Crilly.* The Guardians who take stock.

*Anna.* And how would they know at this time whether there was a hundred or a hundred and fifty tons there at first?

*Crilly.* The business men amongst them would know. However, there won't be an inspection for some time.

*Anna.* Suppose grandfather had got his pension



and had left the Workhouse, who would know about the coal?

*Crilly.* The new Workhouse Master.

*Mrs. Crilly.* The new Workhouse Master ——

*Crilly.* Marianne ——

*Mrs. Crilly.* Well?

*Crilly.* I think I'll stay here and advise the old man.

*Mrs. Crilly.* No. Go away.

*Crilly (at door of apartments).* After all, I'm one of the Guardians, and something might be done.

*Mrs. Crilly.* You can do nothing. We can do nothing for him. Let him go to the strangers.

[*Crilly goes out.*]

*Mrs. Crilly.* Anna!

*Anna.* Yes, mother.

*Mrs. Crilly.* The Martins are not giving up their house for a year or two?

*Anna.* No, mother.

*Mrs. Crilly.* If he resigns now his pension will be safe. There is nothing else against him.

*Anna.* But some one will find out the difference in the coal.

*Mrs. Crilly.* It's the new Workhouse Master who will know that.

*Anna (hardening).* But he could not pass such a thing, mother.

*Mrs. Crilly (abandoning a position).* Well, after your grandfather gets his pension we could make some arrangement with the Guardians.

*Anna.* Yes, mother. Hasn't grandfather a hundred pounds invested in the shop?

*Mrs. Crilly.* It's not a hundred pounds. Besides, it's not an investment.

*Anna (with a certain resolution in her rich voice).* Mother. Is my money safe?

*Mrs. Crilly.* We could give you the eighty

pounds, Anna, but after that we would need all the help we could get from you.

*Anna.* Yes, mother.

*Mrs. Crilly (again taking up a position).* But if we help James Scollard to the place.

*Anna (with determination).* Whether Mr. Scollard gets the place or does not get the place, I'll want my fortune, mother.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Very well, Anna. If we could get him to come over. . . . (*She sits in arm-chair.*) We'll want a nice cloth and good knives and forks. There's a lamb in Ginnell's field; you might call in to-morrow and ask them to prepare it for us.

*Anna.* Then grandfather is coming to dinner on Sunday?

*Mrs. Crilly.* We must get him to come.

[*Some one is coming up the passage. Anna's hand is on handle of door. She holds it open. Thomas Muskerry stands there.*

*Muskerry (pleased to see her).* Well, Nancy!

*Anna.* Good-night, grand-papa. (*He regards her with fondness.*)

*Mrs. Crilly.* Good-night, father.

*Muskerry.* This Nancy girl is looking remarkably well. (*He turns to Mrs. Crilly.*) Well, ma'am, and how are you? I've written that letter for that rascally Albert.

[*He leaves his stick on table and goes to desk.*

*Mrs. Crilly watches him. Anna comes to her. Muskerry addresses an envelope with some labour. Mrs. Crilly notices a tress of Anna's hair falling down. Anna kneels down beside her. She takes off Anna's cap, settles up the hair, and puts the cap on again. Having addressed the envelope, Muskerry holds up a piece of wax to the gas. He seals the letter, then holds it out.*

*Muskerry.* Here's the letter now, and maybe it's the last thing I can do for any of ye.

*Mrs. Crilly.* You are very good.

*[Muskerry goes to them.]*

*Muskerry.* In season and out of season I've put myself at your service. I can do no more for ye.

*[She takes the letter from him. His resentment is breaking down. He sits on chair beside arm-chair. He speaks in a reconciling tone.]*

*Muskerry.* You're looking well, Marianne.

*Mrs. Crilly.* I'm beginning to be well again.

*Muskerry.* And the infant? What age is he now?

*Mrs. Crilly.* Little Joseph is ten months old.

*Muskerry.* I dreamt of him last night. I thought Joseph became a bishop. He ought to be reared for the Church, Marianne. Well, well, I've nothing more to do with that. *(He settles himself in the arm-chair).* Did Christy Clarke bring in the papers?

*Anna.* Christy Clarke hasn't been here at all, grand-papa.

*Muskerry.* Stand here till I look at you Nancy. *(Anna comes left of stove.)* I wouldn't be surprised if you were the best-looking girl in the town, Nancy.

*Anna (without any coquettishness).* Anna Crilly is not going into competition with the others. *(She wraps the muffler round him, then kisses him.)* Good-night, grand-papa. *(She goes out by corridor door.)*

*Mrs. Crilly.* Thank you for the letter for Albert.

*Muskerry.* I think, Marianne, it's the last thing I can do for you or yours.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Well, we can't tell a bad story of you, and things are well with us.



*Muskerry.* I'm glad to hear that. I was thinking of going to see you next week.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Come to dinner on Sunday. We are having a lamb.

*Muskerry.* What sort is the lamb?

*Mrs. Crilly.* Oh, a very young lamb. Anna will make the dressing for you.

*Muskerry.* I'll send round a bottle of wine. Perhaps we'll be in the way of celebrating something for Albert.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Nancy was saying that you might like to stay a few days with us.

*Muskerry.* Stay a few days! How could I do that, ma'am?

*Mrs. Crilly.* You could get somebody to look after the House. James Scollard would do it, and you could stay out for a few days.

*Muskerry.* Well, indeed, I'll do no such thing. What put it into your head to ask me this?

*Mrs. Crilly.* Nancy said——

*Muskerry.* Let the girl speak for herself. What's in your mind, woman?

*Mrs. Crilly.* Well, you're not looking well.

*Muskerry.* I'm as well as ever I was.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Others do not think so.

*Muskerry.* I suppose you heard I was late a few mornings. No matter for that. I'm as well as ever I was. No more talk about it; I'm going on with the work. (*He rises and goes over to desk.*)

*Mrs. Crilly.* I'm sorry to say that no one else thinks as well of you as you do yourself.

*Muskerry.* Well, I'll hear no more about it, and that's enough about it. Why isn't Albert Crilly here?

*Mrs. Crilly.* He was here, and he is coming back.

*Muskerry.* I'll want him. (*He takes up a card left on the desk. He turns round and reads—*



"You have let the Guardians pay for a hundred tons. James Covey delivered only fifty tons of coal." Who left this here?

*Mrs. Crilly.* I suppose Albert left it for you.

*Muskerry.* The impudent rascal. How dare he address himself like that to me? (*He throws card on table.*)

*Mrs. Crilly.* Perhaps he found something out in the books.

*Muskerry.* No matter whether he did or not, he'll have to have respect when he addresses me. Any way it's a lie—a damn infernal lie. I was in the stores the other day, and there was eighty tons of coal still there. Certainly twenty tons had been taken out of it. The Provision Check Account will show. (*He takes up a book and turns round. He goes back some pages. He lets the book fall. He stands there helpless.*) I suppose you all are right in your judgment of me. I'm at my failing time. I'll have to leave this without pension or prospect. They'll send me away.

*Mrs. Crilly.* They had nothing against you before this.

*Muskerry.* I was spoken of as the pattern for the officials of Ireland.

*Mrs. Crilly.* If you resigned now —

*Muskerry.* Before this comes out. (*He looks for help.*) Marianne, it would be like the blow to the struck ox if I lost my pension.

*Mrs. Crilly.* If you managed to get the pension you could pay the Guardians back in a lump sum.

*Muskerry.* If I resigned now, where would I go to?

*Mrs. Crilly.* It was always understood that you would stay with us.

*Muskerry.* No, Marianne.

*Mrs. Crilly.* You'll have the place to yourself. The boys will be going to school, and Albert will

be away, too. Anna and myself will look after you.

*Muskerry.* I could stay for a while.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Oh, well, if you have a better place to go —

*Muskerry.* Remember what I said, Marianne. I've worked for you and yours, in season and out of season. There should be no more claims on me

*Mrs. Crilly.* There are no more claims on you.

*Muskerry.* I'm willing to leave in the shop what I put into the shop. Let Anna know that it will come to her from me. I'll write to the *Guardians* to-night, and I'll send in my resignation. I venture to think that they'll know their loss.

[*Mrs. Crilly goes out quietly by corridor door.*]

*Muskerry (by himself).* And I had made this place as fit for me as the nest for the wren. Wasn't he glad to write that card, the impudent rascal, with his tongue in his cheek? I'll consider it again. I won't leave this place till it fits myself to leave it.

[*Christy Clarke enters by corridor door with papers.*]

*Muskerry.* They want me to resign from this place, Christy.

*Christy.* You're thirty years here! Aren't you, Mister Muskerry?

*Muskerry.* Thirty years, thirty years. Ay, Christy, thirty years; it's a long time. And I'm at my failing time. Perhaps I'm not able to do any more. Day after day there would be troubles here, and I wouldn't be able to face them. And in the end I might lose my position. I'm going to write out my resignation. (*He goes to the desk and writes. Christy is at table. Muskerry turns round after writing.*)

*Muskerry.* No one that comes here can have the same heart for the poor that I had. I was earning

in the year of the famine. I saw able men struggling to get the work that would bring them a handful of Indian meal. And I saw the little children waiting on the roads for relief. (*He turns back and goes on with letter. Suddenly a bell in the House begins to toll.*) What's that for, Christy?

*Christy.* Malachi O'Rourk, the Prince, as they called him, is dead.

*Muskerry.* Aye, I gave orders to toll him when he died. He was an estated gentleman, and songs were made about his family. People used to annoy him, but he's gone from them now. Bring me a little whisky, Christy.

[*Christy goes to Cabinet. Muskerry follows him.*]

*Christy.* There's none in the bottle, Mister Muskerry.

*Muskerry.* No, I suppose not. And is that rascal, Albert Crilly, coming back?

*Christy.* He's coming, Mister Muskerry. I left the novelette on the table. Miss Coghlan says its a nice love story. "The Heart of Angelina," it is called.

*Muskerry.* I haven't the heart to read.

[*The bell continues to toll. Christy goes to door.*]

*Christy.* Good-night, Mister Muskerry.

*Muskerry.* Good-night, Christy.

[*Christy Clarke goes out through apartments.*]

*Thomas Muskerry is standing with hand on arm-chair. The bell tolls.*

(CURTAIN.)



## ACT SECOND.

*In Crilly's, a month later. The room is the parlour off the shop. A glass door, right, leads into the shop, and the fireplace is above this door. In the back, right, is a cupboard door. Back is a window looking on the street. A door, left, leads to other rooms. There is a table near shop door and a horse-hair sofa back, an arm-chair at fire, and two leather-covered chairs about. Conventional pictures on walls, and two certificates framed, showing that some one in the house has passed some Intermediate examinations.*

*It is the forenoon of an April day. Mrs. Crilly is seated on sofa, going through a heap of account books. Anna Crilly is at window. Crofton Crilly enters from the shop.*

*Crilly.* It's all right, Marianne.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Well?

*Crilly.* The Guardians insisted on appointing an outside person to take stock of the workhouse stores. It's the new regulation, you know. Well, the job lay between young Dobbs and Albert, and Albert has got it. I don't say but it was a near thing.

*Mrs. Crilly.* I hope Albert will know what to do.

*Crilly.* He'll want to watch the points. Where's the Master?

*Mrs. Crilly.* He's in his room upstairs.

*Crilly.* Was he not out this morning?

*Mrs. Crilly.* He's not dressed yet.

*Crilly.* He was more particular when he was in the workhouse.

*Anna.* I know who those two children are now. They are the new gas-manager's children.

*Crilly.* He's a Scotchman.

*Anna.* And married for the second time. Mother, Mrs. Dunne is going to the races. Such a sketch of a hat.

*Mrs. Crilly.* It would be better for her if she stayed at home and looked after the business.

*Anna.* She won't have much business to look after soon. That's the third time her husband has come out of Farrell's public-house.

*Crilly.* He's drinking with the Dispensary Doctor. Companions! They're the curse of this town, Marianne. (*He sits down.*)

*Anna.* She's walked into a blind man, hat and all. He's from the Workhouse.

*Crilly.* He's the blind piper out of the workhouse, Myles Gorman.

*Mrs. Crilly.* There's no one within. You should go into the shop, Anna.

*Anna.* Yes, mother. (*She crosses.*) James Scollard is coming in, mother.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Very well, Anna. Stay in the shop until Mary comes.

[*Anna goes into the shop. Crilly moves about.*]

*Mrs. Crilly.* You're very uneasy.

*Crilly.* Yes, I am uneasy, Marianne. There's some presentment on me. Fifty pounds a year is a good pension for the old man. He's a month out now. He ought to be getting an instalment.

[*Anna comes in from shop.*]

*Anna.* Mother, the doctor's daughter is in the shop.

*Mrs. Crilly.* What does she want?

*Anna (imitating an accent).* Send up a pound of butter, two pounds of sugar, and a pound of tea.

*Mrs. Crilly.* These people are paying nobody. But we can't refuse her. I suppose we'll have to send them up. Be very distant with her, Anna.

*Anna.* I've kept her waiting. Here's a letter, mother.

*Mrs. Crilly (taking letter).* When did it come, Anna?

*Anna.* It's just handed in.

[*Anna goes out. Mrs. Crilly opens letter.*]

*Mrs. Crilly.* It's from the bank. They want me to call. What does the bank manager want with me, I wonder?

*Crilly.* I have something to tell you, Marianne. I'll tell you in a while. (*He takes a turn up and down.*)

*Mrs. Crilly.* What do you want to tell me?

*Crilly.* Prepare your mind, Marianne.

*Mrs. Crilly.* What is it?

*Crilly.* I owe you money, Marianne.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Money! How do you owe me money?

*Crilly.* That cute boy, James Covey, who took in all the town ——

*Mrs. Crilly (rising).* Covey! My God! You backed a bill for him?

*Crilly.* I'll make a clean breast of it. I did.

*Mrs. Crilly (with fear in her eyes).* How much is it?

*Crilly (walking away to window).* I'll come to that, Marianne.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Did any one back the bill with you?

*Crilly.* I obliged the fellow. No one backed the bill with me.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Does any one know of it?

*Crilly.* No, Marianne.

*Mrs. Crilly.* The bank. . . . Tell me what happened.



Crilly. The bank manager sent for me when he came to the town after Covey cleared.

Mrs. Crilly. We had four hundred pounds in the bank.

Crilly. We had, Marianne.

Mrs. Crilly. Tell me how much was the bill.

Crilly. There's no use in beating about the bush. The bill was for three hundred pounds.

Mrs. Crilly. And what has the bank done?

Crilly. I'm sorry to say, Marianne, the bank has taken the money over from our account.

Mrs. Crilly. You've ruined us at last, Crofton Crilly.

Crilly. You should never forgive me, Marianne. I'll go to America and begin life again. (*He turns to go out by shop.*)

Mrs. Crilly. We have no money left.

Crilly. A hundred pounds, Marianne.

Mrs. Crilly. That's Anna's money.

Crilly. Scollard should be satisfied.

Mrs. Crilly. Anna insists on getting her money.

Crilly. Very well, Marianne. I'll leave it all to yourself.

[*James Scollard comes in. Anna is behind him. Scollard has an account book in his hand.*]

Scollard. Good morning, Mrs. Crilly. Good morning, Mr. Crilly.

Mrs. Crilly. Good morning, Mr. Scollard.

[*Crofton Crilly turns to go.*]

Anna. Don't go, father.

Scollard. Don't go, Mr. Crilly. I have something particular to say to yourself and Mrs. Crilly.

Mrs. Crilly. Sit down, Mr. Scollard.

[*Anna brings chair, and Scollard sits centre. Anna stands behind him. Mrs. Crilly sits left of him.*]



*Scollard.* I am here to propose for the hand of your daughter, Miss Anna Crilly.

*Mrs. Crilly.* We have nothing to say against your proposal, Mr. Scollard.

*Crilly.* Won't you take something, James?

*Scollard.* No, thanks, Mr. Crilly. I never touch intoxicants.

*[Crofton Crilly goes into shop.]*

*Mrs. Crilly.* We couldn't wish for a better match for Anna. But I feel bound to tell you, Mr. Scollard, that we have had a very severe loss in our business.

*Anna.* What is it, mother?

*Mrs. Crilly.* I don't mind telling you. Mr. Crilly has made himself responsible for a bill on the bank.

*Scollard.* In whose interest, Mrs. Crilly?

*Mrs. Crilly.* He backed a bill for James Covey. A bill for three hundred pounds.

*Anna.* Oh, mother!

*Mrs. Crilly.* It's a dead sure loss. I don't know what we are to do, Anna.

*Scollard.* This is very bad, Mrs. Crilly.

*[Crofton Crilly comes back from shop. He brings in a glass of whisky. He puts whisky on chimney-piece.]*

*Mrs. Crilly.* The bank has taken over three hundred pounds from our account.

*Crilly.* Perhaps Scollard——

*Scollard.* What were you saying, Mr. Crilly?

*Crilly.* Oh, I was just thinking——about a bill you know——. If some one would go security for us at the bank——

*Anna.* Father, what are you saying?

*Mrs. Crilly.* It's unnecessary to talk like that. In spite of your foolishness, we still have a balance at the bank.

*Anna.* My portion comes to me from my grandmother.

*Scollard.* May I ask, Mrs. Crilly, is Miss Crilly's portion safe?

*Mrs. Crilly.* It is safe, Mr. Scollard.

*Scollard.* I have been definitely appointed Master of the Union, and I may say that Anna and myself are anxious to marry.

*Mrs. Crilly.* It needn't be soon, Mr. Scollard.

*Scollard.* After Easter, Mrs. Crilly.

*Mrs. Crilly.* But that's very soon.

*Scollard.* I am anxious to settle down, Mrs. Crilly. I'm on my way to a meeting of the Board of Guardians, but before I go I'd like to have some more information about your loss.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Anna's portion is not touched, but we could hardly afford to let the money go from us now.

*Scollard.* Is that so, Mrs. Crilly?

*Mrs. Crilly.* Three hundred pounds is a very severe loss.

*Scollard.* Very severe, indeed. Still, you understand, Mrs. Crilly, the difficulties of taking such a step as marriage without adequate provision.

*Crilly.* Damn it all, man, Marianne and myself married without anything at all.

*Mrs. Crilly (bitterly).* Anna won't be such a fool as her mother.

*Crilly.* Well, Scollard has his position, and we helped him to it.

*Scollard.* I acknowledge that.

*Anna.* Isn't my portion eighty pounds, mother?

*Mrs. Crilly.* Yes, Anna. But I'd like to tell Mr. Scollard that it would come as a strain on us to let the money go at once.

*Scollard.* I daresay, Mrs. Crilly.

*Anna.* But, mother, wouldn't the money be safer with us?

*Mrs. Crilly.* Well, I leave the whole thing in the hands of Mr. Scollard.

*Scollard.* Anna and myself have been talking things over, Mrs. Crilly.

*Anna.* And we don't want to begin life in a poor way.

*Scollard.* We see the advantage of being always solvent, Mrs. Crilly.

*Anna.* James has ambitions, and there's no reason why he shouldn't venture for the post of Secretary of the County Council when old Mr. Dobbs retires.

*Scollard.* In a few years, Mrs. Crilly, when I had more official experience and some reputation.

*Anna.* Then he would have seven or eight hundred a year.

*Scollard.* As I said, a man like myself would want to be in a perfectly solvent position.

*Anna.* Besides, James has no money of his own.

*Scollard.* I never had the chance of putting money by—Family calls, Mrs. Crilly.

*Anna.* And we don't want to begin life in a poor way.

*Mrs. Crilly.* You won't want the whole of the money. I'll give you forty pounds now.

*Crilly.* And forty when the first child is born.

*Anna.* Oh, father, how can you say such a thing?

*Scollard.* I need only say this. Anna and myself were talking over affairs, and we came to the conclusion it would be best not to start with less than eighty pounds. (*He rises.*) I have to go down to the Board Room now, for there is a meeting of the Guardians (*He goes towards door.*)

*Crilly.* Won't you take a glass?

*Scollard.* No, thanks, Mr. Crilly. I never touch stimulants. Good-day to you all.

[*He goes out. Crofton Crilly goes after him.*]



*Mrs. Crilly.* Anna. You won't be deprived of your money.

*Anna.* Then what's the difficulty, mother?

*Mrs. Crilly.* Let half of the money remain with us for a while.

*Anna.* But, mother, if I don't get all my money, what security have I that what's left will be good in six months or a year?

*Mrs. Crilly.* I'll watch the money for you, Anna.

*Anna.* It's hard to keep a hold on money in a town where business is going down.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Forty pounds will be given to you and forty pounds will be kept safe for you.

*Anna.* Forty pounds! There's not a small farmer comes into the shop but his daughter has more of a dowry than forty pounds.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Think of all who marry without a dowry at all.

*Anna.* You wouldn't have me go to James Scollard without a dowry?

*Mrs. Crilly.* Well, you know the way we're situated. If you insist on getting eighty pounds we'll have to make an overdraft on the bank, and, in the way business is, I don't know how we'll ever recover it.

*Anna.* There won't be much left out of eighty pounds when we get what suits us in furniture.

*Mrs. Crilly.* I could let you have some furniture.

*Anna.* No, mother. We want to start in a way that is different from this house.

*Mrs. Crilly.* You'll want all the money together?

*Anna.* All of it, mother.

*Mrs. Crilly.* You'll have to get it so. But you're very hard, Anna.

*Anna.* This house would teach any one to look to themselves.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Come upstairs. (*Anna goes, left.*) Three hundred pounds of a loss. Eighty pounds with that. I'm terrified when I think. (*She goes after Anna.*)

[*Crofton Crilly comes in from shop. He takes glass of whisky from table, and sits down in arm-chair.*]

*Crilly.* I don't know what Marianne's to do at all. She has a shocking lot to contend with. Can anything be got from the old man, I wonder?

[*Albert Crilly comes in by door, left.*]

*Albert.* Well, pa.

*Crilly.* Well, Albert. What's the news in the town, Albert?

*Albert.* They say that you've backed a bill for Covey.

*Crilly.* If your mother hears that kind of talk she'll be vexed, Albert.

*Albert.* But did you back the bill?

*Crilly.* For Heaven's sake, let me alone, Albert. Yes, I backed the bill.

*Albert.* How much?

*Crilly.* You'll hear all about it from your mother.

*Albert.* They say the bill was for three hundred.

*Crilly.* It was three or thereabouts.

*Albert.* 'Pon my word, father, the mother will have to take out a mandamus against you.

*Crilly.* Don't talk to me in that way, Albert.

*Albert.* It's scandalous, really. I expect you've ruined the business.

*Crilly.* I hate the world.

*Albert.* I believe you've done for the business. I'm going away.

*Crilly.* Then you've got the other appointment?

*Albert.* Temporary clerkship in the Land Department. I wonder would the mother let me have the money for clothes?



*Crilly.* Don't mention it at all to her.

*Albert.* I have a card from a Dublin tailor in my pocket. If I could pay him for one suit, I could get another on tick.

*Crilly.* I tell you not to talk to your mother about money. That fellow, Scollard, has put her out.

*Albert.* How's that?

*Crilly.* Money again. Wants the whole of Anna's portion down. And Anna's backing him up, too. I don't know how your mother can stand it. I don't like Scollard. Then you won't be staying on, Albert, to do the stocktaking in the Workhouse?

*Albert.* No; they'll have to get some one else. I'm glad to be out of that job.

*Crilly.* I'm not sorry, Albert.

*Albert.* The mother would expect me to do something queer in my report.

*Crilly.* Between you and me, Albert, women aren't acquainted with the working of affairs, and they expect unusual things to happen. Who will they make stocktaker now?

*Albert.* Young Dobbs, likely. I suppose the whole business about the coal will come out then?

*Crilly.* I suppose it will; but say nothing about it now, Albert. Let the hare sit.

*Albert.* What does the old man think about it now?

*Crilly.* He's very close to himself. I think he has forgotten all about it.

*Albert.* I wouldn't say so.

*Crilly.* Who's that in the shop, Albert?

*Albert.* Felix Tournour.

*Crilly (rising).* I wonder what they think about Scollard in the Poorhouse. (*He and Albert go into the shop as Muskerry enters from left.*)

[*Muskerry is untidily dressed. His boots are unlaced. He walks across the room and speaks pettishly.*]

*Muskerry.* They haven't brought my soup yet. They won't give much of their time to me. I'm disappointed in Anna Crilly. Well, a certain share in this shop was to have gone to Anna Crilly. I'll get that share, and I'll hoard it up myself. I'll hoard it up. And the fifty pounds of my pension, I'll hoard that up, too  
[*Albert comes in from shop.*

*Muskerry.* That's a black fire that's in the grate. I don't like the coal that comes into this place.

*Albert.* Coal, eh, grandpapa.

*Muskerry.* I said coal.

*Albert.* We haven't good stores here.

*Muskerry.* Confound you for your insolence.

*Albert.* Somebody you know is in the shop—  
*Felix Tournour.*

*Muskerry.* Bid Tournour come in to me.

*Albert (talking into the shop).* You're wanted here, Tournour. Come in now or I'll entertain the boss with "The Devil's Rambles." (*He turns to Muskerry.*) I was given the job of stocktaking.

*Muskerry.* That's a matter for yourself.

*Albert.* I don't think I'll take the job now.

*Muskerry.* Why won't you take it?

*Albert.* I don't know what to say about the fifty tons of coal.

*Muskerry.* I was to precipitate about the coal. And don't have me at the loss of fifty pounds through any of your smartness.

*Albert.* All right, grandfather; I'll see you through.

*Muskerry.* Confound you for a puppy.

[*Felix Tournour enters. He looks prosperous. He has on a loud check suit. He wears a red tie and a peaked cap.*

*Albert.* The Master wants to speak to you, Tournour.

*Tournour.* What Master?

*Albert.* The boss, Tournour, the boss.

*Muskerry.* I want you, and that's enough for you, Tournour.

*Albert.* I suppose you don't know, grandpapa, that Tournour has a middling high position in the Poorhouse now.

*Muskerry.* What are you saying?

*Albert.* Tournour is Ward-master now.

*Muskerry.* I wasn't given any notice of that.

*Albert.* Eh, Tournour—

“The Devil went out for a ramble at night,  
Through Garrisowen Union to see every  
sight.

He saw Felix Tournour —

*Tournour*—

“He saw one in comfort, of that you'll be sure.  
With his back to the fire stands Felix  
Tournour.”

[*He puts his back to fire.*

*Albert.* Well, so-long, gents. (*He goes out by shop door.*)

*Muskerry.* Let me see you, Tournour.

*Tournour.* I'm plain to be seen.

*Muskerry.* Who recommended you for Ward-master?

*Tournour.* Them that had the power.

*Muskerry.* I would not have done it, Tournour.

*Tournour.* No. And still, d'ye see, I'm up and not down. Well, I'll be going.

*Muskerry.* Come back here, Tournour. I made it a rule that no Ward-master should let drink be brought in to the paupers.

*Tournour.* It's a pity you're not Master still!

*Muskerry.* What are you saying?

*Tournour.* It's a pity that you're not still the master over us.

*Muskerry.* Tournour, you're forgetting yourself.



*Tournour.* Well, maybe you are still the Master.

*Muskerry.* How dare you speak to me with such effrontery? How dare you?

*Tournour.* I dunno. I'm going away now, if your honour has nothing more to say to me. (*He turns to go.*)

*Muskerry.* You shall not. You shall not, I say.

*Tournour.* What?

*Muskerry.* You shall not go away until you've apologised to me.

*Tournour.* Don't be talking, Thomas Muskerry. You're not master over me.

*Muskerry.* Not the master over you?

*Tournour.* No. There's an end to your sway, Mr. Muskerry.

*Muskerry.* Go out of the house. No, stay here. You think I'm out of the Workhouse. No. That's not so. I've claims, great claims, on it still. Not for nothing was I there for thirty years, the pattern for the officials of Ireland.

*Tournour.* Twenty-nine years, I'm telling you.

*Muskerry.* The Guardians will take account of me.

*Tournour.* And maybe they would, too.

*Muskerry.* What's that you're saying?

*Tournour.* The Guardians might take an account of Thomas Muskerry in a way he mightn't like. (*He goes to door.*)

*Muskerry.* Come back here, Felix Tournour.

*Tournour.* I'm not at your bidding.

*Muskerry.* Stand here before me.

*Tournour.* You and your before me! Your back to heaven and your belly to hell.

*Muskerry.* Go away. Go away out of this.

*Tournour.* Don't try to down-face me. I know something about you.

*Muskerry.* About me!



*Tournour.* Aye, you and your fifty tons of coal. (*Muskerry goes back from him.*) Great claims on the Workhouse have you. The Guardians will take account of you. Will they? Talk to them about the fifty tons of coal. Go and do that, my pattern of the officials of Ireland!

[*Tournour goes out by shop. Muskerry stands with his hands on the arm-chair.*]

*Muskerry.* This minute I'll go down to the Guardians and make my complaint. (*He notices his appearance.*) I'm going about all day with my boots unlaced. I'm falling into bad ways, bad, slovenly ways. And my coat needs brushing, too. (*He takes off his coat and goes to window and brushes it.*) That's Myle's Gorman going back to the Workhouse. I couldn't walk with my head held as high as that. In this house I am losing my uprightness. I'll do more than lace my boots and brush my coat. I'll go down to the Guardians and I'll pay them back their fifty pounds.

[*Anna Crilly comes in from left with a bowl of soup.*]

*Anna.* Here's your soup, grandpapa.

*Muskerry.* I can't take it now, Anna. (*He puts on his coat.*)

*Anna.* Are you going out, grandpapa?

*Muskerry.* I'm going before the meeting of the Board of Guardians.

*Anna.* Are you, grandpapa?

*Muskerry.* Yes, Anna, I am. I'm going to pay them back their fifty pounds.

*Anna.* And have you the fifty pounds?

*Muskerry.* Your mother has it for me.

*Anna.* Sit down, grandpapa, and take your soup.

*Muskerry.* No, Anna, I won't take anything until my mind is at rest about the coal. A certain

person has spoken to me in a way I'll never submit to be spoken to again.

[*Mrs. Crilly comes in.*

*Mrs. Crilly.* What has happened to you?

*Muskerry.* Felix Tournour knows about the coal, Marianne. He can disgrace me before the world.

*Anna.* And grandpapa wants to go before the Guardians and pay them back the fifty pounds.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Wait until we consult Mr. Scollard.

[*Anna goes out.*

*Muskerry.* No, Marianne. I'm not going to be a party to this any longer. I'm going before the Guardians, and I'll pay them back their fifty pounds.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Fifty pounds. From what place is fifty pounds to come so easily?

*Muskerry.* I'll ask you to give me the fifty pounds, Marianne.

*Mrs. Crilly.* I'll do no such thing. Anna is getting married, and she claims her fortune.

*Muskerry.* Anna getting married. This was kept from me. And who is Anna getting married to?

*Mrs. Crilly.* To James Scollard.

*Muskerry.* To James Scollard. And so Anna is getting married to my successor, James Scollard. My successor. How well I knew there was some such scheme behind shifting me out of the Workhouse. And Anna Crilly was against me all the time. Well, well, well. I'll remember this.

*Mrs. Crilly.* I'm at great losses since you came here.

*Muskerry.* I'm at greater losses, Marianne.

*Mrs. Crilly.* What losses are you at?

*Muskerry.* The loss of my trust, the loss of my dignity, my self-respect, and ——

*Mrs. Crilly.* I think we did all we could for you.

*Muskerry.* I'm going out now to pay back the Guardians the sum due to them from me. I want fifty pounds from you. I claim it, and I have a right to claim it.

*Mrs. Crilly.* We have no money at all. Listen. Crofton Crilly backed a bill for James Covey, and three hundred pounds has been taken from our account.

*Muskerry.* Three hundred pounds.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Yes. Three hundred pounds.

*Muskerry.* He backed a bill for three hundred pounds. And do you think, Marianne Crilly, there can be any luck in a house where such a thing could happen? I tell you there is no luck nor grace in your house. (*He puts on his hat and goes to cupboard to get his stick. He opens the cupboard. He turns round.*)

*Muskerry* (*greatly moved*). My God, my God. I'm made cry at the things that happen in this house.

*Mrs. Crilly.* What is it?

*Muskerry.* The good meat I brought in. There it is on the floor, and the cat mangling it. I'll go out of this house, and I'll never put foot into it again.

*Mrs. Crilly.* And where will you go?

*Muskerry.* I'll go before the Board of Guardians and I'll ask them to provide for me.

*Mrs. Crilly.* What do you want me to do for you?

*Muskerry.* Give me fifty pounds, so that I can pay them off now.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Haven't I told you the way I'm straitened for money?

*Muskerry.* You have still in the bank what would save my name.



*Mrs. Crilly.* Don't be unreasonable. I have to provide for my children.

*Muskerry.* Your children. Yes, you have to provide for your children. I provided for them long enough. And now you would take my place, my honour, and my self-respect, and provide for them over again. (*He goes out.*)

*Mrs. Crilly.* I'll have to put up with this, too.

[*Anna re-enters.*]

*Anna.* Where has he gone, mother?

*Mrs. Crilly.* He has gone down to the Workhouse.

*Anna.* What is he going to do, mother?

*Mrs. Crilly.* He says he will ask the Guardians to provide for him.

*Anna.* It's not likely they'll do that for a man with a pension of fifty pounds a year.

*Mrs. Crilly.* I don't know what will happen to us.

*Anna.* He'll come back, mother.

*Mrs. Crilly.* He will. But everything will have been made public, and the money will have to be paid.

*Anna (at the window).* There he is going down the street, mother.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Which way?

*Anna.* Towards the Workhouse. And here's the doctor's daughter coming into the shop again, mother.

*Mrs. Crilly.* I'll go out and see her myself. (*As she goes out she hands Anna a cheque.*) That's the last cheque I'll be able to make out. There's your eighty pounds, Anna. (*She goes into the shop.*)

*Anna.* We can begin to get the furniture now.

[*She sits down at the table and makes some calculation with a pencil.*]

(CURTAIN.)



## ACT THIRD

*The infirm ward in the Workhouse. Entrance from corridor, right. Forward, left, are three beds with bedding folded upon them. Back, left, is a door leading into Select Ward. This door is closed, and a large key is in lock. fireplace with a grating around it, left. Back, right, is a window with little leaded panes.*

*It is noon on a May day, but the light inside the ward is feeble.*

*Two paupers are seated at fire. One of them, Mickie Cripes, is a man of fifty, stooped, and hollow-chested, but with quick blue eyes. The other man, Tom Shanley, is not old, but he looks broken and listless. Myles Gorman, still in pauper dress, is standing before window, an expectant look on his face.*

*[Gorman turns to the men eagerly.]*

Gorman. You'll hear my pipes on the road to-day. Where's the Master?

Cripes. Which Master?

Gorman. Mister Muskerry.

Cripes. You'll see him soon.

Gorman. You'll hear my pipes on the road to-day. That's as sure as the right hand is on my body. *(He goes out by corridor door.)*

Cripes. I'll tell you what brought Thomas Muskerry back. Living in a bad house. Living with his own. That's what brought him back. And that's what left me here, too.

*Shanley* (listlessly). The others have the flour, and we may hawk the bran.

[*An old pauper comes into the ward. His face looks bleached. He has the handle of a sweeping-brush for a staff. He moves about the ward, muttering to himself. He seats himself on chair, right.*

*The Old Man* (speaking as if thinking aloud). I was at twelve o'clock Mass. Now one o'clock would be a late Mass. I was at Mass at one o'clock. Wouldn't that be a long time to keep a priest, and he fasting the whole time?

*Cripes*. I'll tell you what Thomas Muskerrey did when he left the bad house he was in. (*He puts coal on the fire.*)

*The Old Man*. I was at one o'clock Mass in Skibbereen. I know where Skibbereen is well. In the County Cork. Cork is a big county. As big as Dublin and Wicklow. That's where the people died when there was the hunger.

*Cripes*. He came before the meeting of the Guardians, and he told them he owed them the whole of his year's pension. Then he got some sort of a stroke, and he broke down. And the Guardians gave him the Select Ward there for himself.

*Shanley*. They did well for him.

*Cripes*. Why wouldn't they give him the Select Ward? It's right that he'd get the little room, and not have to make down the pauper's bed with the rest of us.

*Shanley*. He was at the altar to-day, and he stayed in the chapel after Mass.

*Cripes*. He'll be here shortly.

*The Old Man*. Skibbereen! That's where the people died when there was the hunger. Men and women without coffins, or even their clothes off. Just buried. Skibbereen I remember well, for I was a

whole man then. And the village. For there are people living in it yet. They didn't all die.

*[Thomas Muskerry enters from corridor. He wears his own clothes, but he has let them get into disorder. His hair and beard are disordered, and he seems very much broken down. Nevertheless; he looks as if his mind were composed.]*

Muskerry. It's dark in here, Michael.

Cripes. It is, sir.

Muskerry. I find it very spiritless after coming up from the chapel. Don't pass your whole day here. Go down into the yard. *(He stands before the window.)* This is the first fine day, and you ought to go out along the country road. Ask the Master for leave. It's the month of May, and you'll be glad of the sight of the grass and the smell of the bushes. Now here's a remarkable thing. I venture to think that the like of this has never happened before. Here are the bees swarming at the window pane.

Cripes. Myles Gorman must have been glad to hear that buzzing.

Muskerry. Why was Myles glad to hear it?

Shanley. He was leaving on the first fine day.

Cripes. The buzzing at the pane would let any one know that the air is nice for a journey.

Muskerry. I am leaving to-day, myself.

Cripes. And where are you going, Mr. Muskerry?

Muskerry. I'm going to a place of my own.

*[The man with the staff rises, mopes about the ward, and goes out. Muskerry goes into the Select Ward.]*

Shanley. We'll have somebody else in the Select Ward this evening.

Cripes. That's what they were talking about. The nuns are sending a patient up here.



*Shanley.* I suppose the Ward-master will be in here to regulate the room. (*He rises.*)

*Cripes.* Aye, the Ward-master. Felix Tournour, the Ward-master. You've come to your own place at last, Felix Tournour.

*Shanley.* Felix Tournour will be coming the master over me if he finds me here. (*Shanley goes out.*)

*Cripes.* Felix Tournour! That's the lad that will be coming in with his head up like the gander that's after beating down a child.

[*Christy Clarke enters. He carries a little portmanteau.*

*Christy.* Is Mr. Muskerry here?

*Cripes.* He's in the room. (*A sound of water splashing and the movements of a heavy person are heard.*) Will you be speaking with him, young fellow?

*Christy.* I will.

*Cripes.* Tell him, like a good little boy, that the oul' men would be under a favour to him if he left a bit of tobacco. You won't forget that?

*Christy.* I won't forget it.

*Cripes.* I don't want to be in the way of Felix Tournour. We're going down to the yard, but we'll see Mr. Muskerry when he's going away.

*Cripes goes out.*

*Muskerry (within).* Is that you, Christy Clarke?

*Christy.* It is, Mr. Muskerry.

*Muskerry.* Have you any news, Christy?

*Christy.* No news, except that my mother is in the cottage, and is expecting you to-day.

*Muskerry.* I'll be in the cottage to-day, Christy. I'm cleaning myself. (*A sound of splashing and moving about.*) The Guardians were good to get the little house for me. I'd as lieve be there as in a mansion. There's about half



an acre of land to the place, and I'll do work on the ground from time to time, for it's a good thing for a man to get the smell of the clay.

*Christy.* And how are you in health, Mr. Muskerry?

*Muskerry.* I'm very well in health. I was anointed, you know, and after that I mended miraculously.

*Christy.* And what about the pension?

*Muskerry.* I'm getting three hundred pounds. They asked me to realise the pension. I hope I have life enough before me. (*He comes out. He has on trousers, coat, and starched shirt. The shirt is soiled and crushed.*)

*Muskerry.* On Saturdays I'll do my marketing. I'll come into the town, and I'll buy the bit of meat for my dinner on Sunday. But what are you doing with this portmanteau, Christy?

*Christy.* I'm going away myself.

*Muskerry.* To a situation, is it?

*Christy.* To a situation in Dublin.

*Muskerry.* I wish you luck, Christy. (*He shakes hands with the boy, and sits down on a chair.*) I was dreaming on new things all last night. New shirts, new sheets, everything new.

*Christy.* I want to be something.

*Muskerry.* What do you want to be?

*Christy.* A writer.

*Muskerry.* A writer of books, is it?

*Christy.* Yes, a writer of books.

*Muskerry.* Listen, now, and tell me do you hear anything. That's the sound of bees swarming at the window. That's a good augury for you, Christy.

*Christy.* All life's before me.

*Muskerry.* Will you give heed to what I tell you?

*Christy.* I'll give heed to it, Mr. Muskerry.

*Muskerry.* Live a good life.

*Christy.* I give heed to you.

*Muskerry.* Your mother had great hardship in rearing you.

*Christy.* I know that, Mr. Muskerry, but now I'm able for the world.

*Muskerry.* I wish success to all your efforts. Be very careful of your personal appearance.

*Christy.* I will, Mr. Muskerry.

*Muskerry.* Get yourself a new cravat before you leave the town.

*Christy.* I'll get it.

*Muskerry.* I think I'd look better myself if I had a fresher shirt.

*Christy.* I saw clean shirts of yours before the fire last night in my mother's house.

*Muskerry.* I wish I could get one before I leave this place.

*Christy.* Will I run off and get one for you?

*Muskerry.* Would you, Christy? Would it be too much trouble?

[*Muskerry rises.*]

*Christy.* I'll go now.

*Muskerry.* You're a very willing boy, Christy, and you're sure to get on. (*He goes to a little broken mirror on the wall.*) I am white and loose of flesh, and that's not a good sign with me, Christy. I'll tell you something. If I were staying here to-night, it's the pauper's bed I'd have to sleep on.

[*Mrs. Crilly comes to the door.*]

*Mrs. Crilly.* Well, I see you're making ready for your departure.

*Muskerry* (*who has become uneasy*). I am ready for my departure.

*Mrs. Crilly.* And this young man has come for you, I suppose?

*Muskerry.* This young man is minding his own business.

*Christy.* I'm going out now to get a shirt for the Master.

*Mrs. Crilly.* A starched shirt, I suppose, Christy. Go down to our house, and tell Mary to give you one of the shirts that are folded up.

*Muskerry.* The boy will go where he was bid go.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Oh, very well. Run Christy and do the message for the Master.

[*Christy Clarke goes out.*]

*Muskerry.* I don't know what brought you here to-day.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Well, I wanted to see you.

*Muskerry.* You could come to see me when I was settled down.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Settled in the cottage the Guardians have given you?

*Muskerry.* Yes, ma'am.

*Mrs. Crilly* (*with nervous excitement, restrained.*) No one of us will ever go near the place.

*Muskerry.* Well, you'll please yourself.

*Mrs. Crilly.* You put a slight on us all when you go there to live.

*Muskerry.* Well, I've lived with you to my own loss.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Our house is the best house in the town, and I'm the nearest person to you.

*Muskerry.* Say nothing more about that.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Well, maybe you do right not to live with us, but you ought not to forsake us altogether.

*Muskerry.* And what do you mean by forsaking you altogether?

*Mrs. Crilly.* When you leave the place and do not even turn your step in our direction it's a sign



to all who want to know that you forsake us altogether.

*Muskerry.* What do you want me to do?

*Mrs. Crilly.* Come up to Cross Street with me, have dinner and spend the night with us. People would have less to talk about if you did that.

*Muskerry.* You always have a scheme.

*Mrs. Crilly.* Come to us for this evening itself.

*Muskerry.* I wish you wouldn't trouble me, woman. Can't you see that when I go out of this I want to go to my own place?

*Mrs. Crilly.* You can go there to-morrow.

*Muskerry.* Preparations are made for me.

*Mrs. Crilly.* You don't know what preparations.

*Muskerry.* Two pounds of the best beef-steak were ordered to be sent up to-day.

*Mrs. Crilly.* I wouldn't trust that woman, Mrs. Clarke, to cook potatoes.

*Muskerry.* Well, I'll trust her ma'am.

*Mrs. Crilly* (taking *Muskerry's* sleeve). Don't go to-day, anyway.

*Muskerry.* You're very anxious to get me to come with you. What do you want from me?

*Mrs. Crilly.* We want nothing from you. You know how insecure our business is. When it's known in the town that you forsake us, everybody will close in on us.

*Muskerry.* God knows I did everything that a man could do for you and yours. I won't forget you. I haven't much life left to me, and I want to live to myself.

*Mrs. Crilly.* I know. Sure I lie awake at night, too tired to sleep, and long to get away from the things that are pressing in on me. I know that people are glad of their own way, and glad to live in the way that they like. When I heard the birds stirring I cried to be away in some place



where I won't hear the thing that's always knocking at my head. The business has to be minded, and it's slipping away from us like water. And listen, if my confinement comes on me and I worried as I was last year, nothing can save me. I'll die, surely.

*Muskerry (moved).* What more do you want me to do?

*Mrs. Crilly.* Stay with us for a while, so that we'll have the name of your support.

*Muskerry.* I'll come back to you in a week.

*Mrs. Crilly.* That wouldn't do at all. There's a reason for what I ask. The town must know that you are with us from the time you leave this.

*Muskerry (with emotion).* God help me with you all, and God direct me what to do.

*Mrs. Crilly.* It's not in you to let us down.

[*Muskerry turns away. His head is bent.*

*Mrs. Crilly goes to him.*

*Muskerry.* Will you never be done taking from me? I want to leave this and go to a place of my own.

[*Muskerry puts his hand to his eyes. When he lowers his hand again Mrs. Crilly lays hers in it. Christy Clarke comes in. Muskerry turns to him. Muskerry has been crying.*

*Muskerry.* Well, Christy, I'll be sending you back on another message.

[*Mrs. Crilly makes a sign to Christy not to speak.*

*Muskerry.* Go to your mother and tell her ——

*Christy.* I met my mother outside.

*Muskerry.* Did she get the things that were sent to her?

*Christy.* My mother was sent away from the cottage.

*Muskerry.* And who sent your mother away from the cottage?

*Christy.* Mrs. Crilly sent her away.

*Muskerry.* And why did you do that, ma'am?

*Mrs. Crilly.* I sent Mary to help to prepare the place for you, and the woman was impertinent to Mary ——

*Muskerry.* Well, ma'am?

*Mrs. Crilly.* I sent the woman away.

*Muskerry.* And so you take it on yourself to dispose of the servants in my house?

*Mrs. Crilly.* I daresay you'll take the woman's part against my daughter.

*Muskerry.* No, ma'am, I'll take no one's side, but I'll tell you this. I want my own life, and I won't be interfered with.

*Mrs. Crilly.* I'm sorry for what occurred, and I'll apologise to the boy's mother if you like.

*Muskerry.* I won't be interfered with, I tell you. From this day out I'm free of my own life. And now, Christy Clarke, go down stairs and tell the Master, Mr. Scollard, that I want to see him.

*[Christy Clarke goes out.]*

*Mrs. Crilly.* I may as well tell you something else. None of the things you ordered were sent up to the cottage.

*Muskerry.* Do you tell me that?

*Mrs. Crilly.* I went round to the shop, and everything you ordered was sent to us.

*Muskerry.* And what is the meaning of that, ma'am?

*Mrs. Crilly.* If the town knew you were going from us, in a week we would have to put up the shutters.

*Muskerry.* Well, I'll walk out of this, and when I come to the road I'll go my own way.

*Mrs. Crilly.* We can't prevent you.

*Muskerry.* No, ma'am, you can't prevent me.

*Mrs. Crilly.* You've got your discharge, I suppose?

*Muskerry.* I've given three hours' notice, and I'll get my discharge now.

*Mrs. Crilly (at corridor door).* We can't prevent you going if you have the doctor's discharge.

*Muskerry.* The doctor's discharge! He would have given it to me ——

*Mrs. Crilly.* You can't leave without the doctor's sanction.

*Muskerry.* Out of this house I will go to-day.

[*James Scollard enters.*]

*Scollard.* I believe you want to see me, Mr. Muskerry.

*Muskerry.* I do, Mr. Scollard. I am leaving the house.

*Scollard.* I will be glad to take up the necessary formalities for you, Mr. Muskerry.

*Mrs. Crilly.* First of all, has the doctor marked my father off the infirmary list?

*Scollard.* No, Mrs. Crilly. Now that I recall the list, he has not.

*Muskerry.* I waited after Mass to-day, and I missed seeing him.

*Mrs. Crilly.* My father was seriously ill only a short time ago, and I do not believe he is in a fit state to leave the infirmary.

*Scollard.* That certainly has to be considered. Without the doctor explicitly sending you down to the body of the house you are hardly under my jurisdiction, Mr. Muskerry.

*Muskerry.* Mr. Scollard, I ask you to give me leave to go out of the Workhouse for a day. You can do this on your own responsibility.

*Mrs. Crilly.* In the present state of his mind it's not likely he would return to-night. Then if anything happened him your situation is at stake.

*Muskerry.* I'm not a pauper. I'll go out of



this to-day without leave or licence from any of you.

*Scollard.* As you know yourself, Mr. Muskerry, it would be as much as my situation is worth to let you depart in that way.

*Muskerry.* Well, go I will.

*Scollard.* I cannot permit it, Mr. Muskerry. I say it with the greatest respect.

*Muskerry.* How long will you keep me here?

*Scollard.* Until the doctor visits the house.

*Muskerry.* That will be on Monday morning.

*Scollard.* And this is Saturday, Mr. Muskerry.

*Muskerry.* And where will you put me until Monday?

*Scollard.* Other arrangements will be made for you.

*Muskerry.* It's the pauper's bed you would give me!

*Scollard.* The old arrangements will continue. Can I do anything further for you, Mr. Muskerry?

*Muskerry.* No, you can do nothing further for me. It's a great deal you have done for me! It's the pauper's bed you have given me! (*He goes into the Select Ward.*)

*Mrs. Crilly.* Sit down, Mr. Scollard. I want to speak to you.

[*Mrs. Crilly seats herself at the table. Scollard sits down also.*]

*Mrs. Crilly.* The bank manager is in the town to-day, and there are people waiting to tell him whether my father goes to our house or goes away from us.

*Scollard.* No doubt there are, Mrs. Crilly.

*Mrs. Crilly.* But you have nothing to do with that, Mr. Scollard.

*Scollard.* No, Mrs. Crilly.

*Mrs. Crilly.* I have my own battle to fight, and a hard battle it is. I have to make bits of myself to mind everything and be prepared for everything.



Scollard. No doubt, Mrs. Crilly.

Mrs. Crilly. There are people who will blame me, but they cannot see into my mind.

Scollard. Will you come down to the parlour, Mrs. Crilly?

Mrs. Crilly. Yes, I'll go down.

*[She remains seated, looking out steadily before her. Myles Gorman comes in. He is dressed in his own clothes.]*

Scollard. Well, Gorman, what brings you back to the ward?

Gorman. I just want to do something to my pipes, Master.

Scollard. Very well, Gorman. You have your discharge, and you are free to leave.

Gorman. Oh, in a while I'll be taking the road.

*[He seats himself at the fire and begins to fix the bag of his pipes.]*

Scollard. Now, Mrs. Crilly, come down to the parlour.

Mrs. Crilly. Yes.

Scollard. Anna is waiting to see you.

Mrs. Crilly (rising). He will be well cared for here.

Scollard. He will, Mrs. Crilly. I will give him all attention.

Mrs. Crilly. He expected to be in a different place to-day, but delay does little harm.

Scollard. Come down to the parlour, Mrs. Crilly, and drink a glass of wine with us.

Mrs. Crilly. He was threatened with something, apoplexy, I think.

*[They go out. The door of the Select Ward opens, and Thomas Muskerry appears. He has got a stroke. His breathing makes a noise in his mouth. As he moves he lags somewhat at the right knee. He carries his right hand at his breast. He moves slowly across ward. Felix Tour-nour enters, carrying a bunch of keys.]*

*Tournour.* And where are you going?

*Muskerry (in a thickened voice).* Ow — out.  
(*Motioning with left hand. He moves across ward, and goes out on door of corridor.*)

*Tournour.* Well, you're not getting back to your snugger, my oul' cod. (*He goes into the Select Ward and begins to pitch Muskerry's belongings into the outer ward. First of all come the pillows and clothes off the bed.*) And there's your holy picture, and there's your holy book. (*He comes out holding another book in official binding. He opens it and reads.*) "Marianne, born May the 20th, 1870." (*He turns back some pages and reads.*) Thomas Muskerry wrote this, 1850—

"In the pleasant month of May,  
When the lambkins sport and play,  
As I roved out for recreation,  
I spied a comely maid,  
Sequestered in the shade,  
And on her beauty I gazed in admiration.

"I said I greatly fear  
That Mercury will draw near,  
As once he appeared unto Venus,  
Or as it might have been  
To the Carthaginian Queen,  
Or the Grecian Wight called Polyphemus."

[*Muskerry comes back to the ward. He stands looking stupidly at the heap Tournour has thrown out. Tournour throws down the book. Muskerry goes towards the open door of the ward. Felix Tournour closes the door deliberately, turns the key and holds the key in his hand.*

*Tournour.* You have no more to do with your snug little ward, Mr. Muskerry. (*He puts the key on his bunch and goes out.*)

*Muskerry (muttering with slack lips and cheeks).*

It's —— it's —— the pau —— pauper's bed they've given me.

*Gorman* (turning round his face). Who's there?

*Muskerry*. It's —— it's —— Thomas Muskerry.

*Gorman*. Is that the Master?

*Muskerry*. It's —— it's the pauper's bed they've given me.

*Gorman*. Can I give you any hand, Master?

*Muskerry*. I'll want to make —— the bed. Give me a hand to make the bed. (*Gorman comes over to him.*) My own sheet and blanket is here. I needn't lie on a pauper's sheet. Whose bed is this?

*Gorman*. It's the middle bed, Master. It's my own bed.

*Muskerry* (helplessly). What bed will I take, then?

*Gorman*. My bed. I won't be here.

*Muskerry*. And where are you going?

*Gorman*. I'm leaving the house this day. I'll be going on the roads.

*Muskerry*. Myles —— Myles Gorman. The man that was without family or friends. Myles Gorman. Help me to lay down the mattress. Where will you sleep to-night, Myles Gorman?

*Gorman*. At Mrs. Muirnan's, a house between this and the town of Ballinagh. I haven't the money to pay, but she'll give me the place for to-night. Now, Master, I'll spread the sheet for you.

[*They spread the sheet on the bed.*]

*Muskerry*. Can you go down the stairs, Myles Gorman? I tried to get down the stairs and my legs failed me.

*Gorman*. One of the men will lead me down.

*Muskerry* (resting his hand on the bed and



*standing up*). Sure one of the men will lead me down the stairs, too.

*[Myles Gorman spreads blanket on bed. He stands up, takes the pipes, and is ready to go out. Muskerry becomes more feeble. He puts himself on the bed.]*

Muskerry. Myles —— Myles Gorman —— come back.

Gorman. What will I do for you, Master?

Muskerry. Say a prayer for me.

Gorman. What prayer will I say, Master?

Muskerry. Say "God be good to Thomas Muskerry"

Gorman (*taking off his hat*). "God be good to Thomas Muskerry, the man who was good to the poor." Is that all, Master?

Muskerry. That's —— that's all.

*[Gorman goes to the door.]*

Gorman. In a little while you'll hear my pipes on the road.

*[He goes out. There is the sound of heavy breathing from the bed. Then silence. The old pauper with the staff enters. He is crossing the ward when his attention is taken by the humming of the bees at the window pane. He listens for a moment.]*

The Old Pauper. A bright day, and the clay on their faces. That's what I saw. And we used to be coming from Mass and going to the coursing match. The hare flying and the dogs stretching after her up the hill. Fine dogs and fine men. I saw them all.

*[Christy Clarke comes in. He goes to table for his bag. He sees the figure on the bed, and goes over.]*

Christy. I'm going now, Mister Muskerry. Mister Muskerry! Mr. Muskerry! Oh! the Master is dead. (*He runs back to the door.*) Mrs.

Crilly. Mrs. Crilly. (*He goes back to the bed, and throws himself on his knees.*) Oh! I'm sorry you're gone, Thomas Muskerry.

*The Old Pauper.* And is he gone home, too! And the bees humming and all! He was the best of them. Each of his brothers could lift up their plough and carry it to the other side of the field. Four of them could clear a fair. But their fields were small and poor, and so they scattered.

[*Mrs. Crilly comes in.*]

Mrs. Crilly. Christy Clarke, what is it?

Christy. The Master is dead.

Mrs. Crilly. My God, my God!

Christy. Will I go and tell them below?

Mrs. Crilly. No. Bring no one here yet. We killed him. When everything is known that will be known.

Christy. I'll never forget him, I think.

Mrs. Crilly. What humming is that?

Christy. The bees at the window pane. And there's Myles Gorman's pipes on the road.

[*The clear call of the pipes is heard.*]

(THE CURTAIN FALLS.)

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"Thomas Muskerry" was first produced on May 5th, 1910, by the Abbey Theatre Company, at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, with the following cast:—

Thomas Muskerry	.	.	ARTHUR SINCLAIR
Mrs. Crilly	.	.	SARA ALLGOOD
Crofton Crilly	.	.	J. M. KERRIGAN
Albert Crilly	.	.	ERIC GORMAN
Anna Crilly	.	.	MAIRE O'NEILL
Myles Gorman	.	.	FRED O'DONOVAN
Felix Tournour	.	.	SYDNEY MORGAN
James Scollard	.	.	J. A. O'ROURKE
Christy Clarke	.	.	U. WRIGHT
Mickie Cripes	.	.	FRED ROWLAND
Tom Shanley	.	.	AMBROSE POWER
An Old Pauper	.	.	J. M. KERRIGAN





